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# NEWSLETTER

A Bimonthly Newsletter for Economic Research Service Employees and Colleagues

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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## New Social Science Research Funds

Social science research on food and agriculture issues received a small boost this year through the National Research Initiative, a new competitive grants program managed by USDA's Cooperative State Research Service. The NRI, initiated in FY 1991 to address underinvestment in agricultural research, provides an infusion of funds into the agricultural research system—\$73 million in FY 1991, \$98 million in FY 1992, and a proposed \$150 million in FY 1993.

The NRI has six program components, all but one of which relate primarily to biological and physical processes or systems. The exception is the markets, trade, and policy component. It was funded for the first time this fiscal year. It makes \$3.8 million available for competitively selected research on a limited set of foreign agricultural market assessments; studies of U.S. competitiveness in various commodity markets; assessments of new agricultural technologies, with a focus on sustainable practices and systems; and various rural development studies.

Any domestic public research institution or organization (including ERS), any U.S.-based private organization or corporation, or any individual is eligible to submit a research proposal under the NRI. Peer review is the essential element of the selection process. Multidisciplinary and multiple-institution proposals appear likely to receive special favor in the process. Guidelines for proposal preparation and submission may be obtained from

CSRS (room 323, Aerospace Bldg., Washington, DC 20250-2200).

The deadline for submitting proposals under the markets, trade, and policy component is March 30, 1992. Grant opportunities this year for social science research funding under other NRI program components are limited. Economic and policy analysis are explicitly excluded from support under the natural resources and environment component, and the research focus this year in the other components (nutrition, food quality and health, animal systems, plant systems, and processing antecedent to adding value or developing new products) is geared more to basic scientific research than to topics that easily lend themselves to multidisciplinary collaboration with economists and other social scientists.

Additional opportunities for social science research are planned as NRI appropriations increase. The maximum authorization for the NRI is \$500 million per year. As principal and alternate members of the board of directors, ERS administrator John Lee and associate administrator Katherine Reichelderfer will participate in that evolution. For more information on the NRI, or to offer reactions and suggestions on its current program, contact Katherine Reichelderfer (202-219-0302), who is the primary ERS contact on social science research under the NRI.

## ERS Offers Summer Employment Opportunities

This summer, as in other years, ERS will give undergraduate and graduate students the opportunity to participate in economic research on topics such as world trade, the environment, farm policy, rural communities, consumer issues, world food situation, and the changes in Eastern and Central Europe and the former republics of the Soviet Union.

Students should have had one or more courses in economics, though they need not be majoring in economics or agricultural economics. The jobs will enable the students to explore their own interests in economics as a potential career field and to learn the kinds of work ERS offers as a potential future employer. At the same time, ERS staff will receive much-needed assistance from the students and can help the students in their career search.

Students will receive salaries based on their level of education and experience, ranging from \$8.50 per hour for a student with 2 years of college and several courses related to economics to \$12.90 per hour for a student with a masters degree in economics. If budget and USDA regulations permit, ERS will provide housing and assist with commuting costs.

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Applications should be mailed by March 15. They should include a Standard Form 171 (Application for Federal Employment) and either a college transcript or OPM Form 1170/17 (List of College Courses and Certificate of Scholastic Achievement). Students wishing to work in a particular area should mention their area of interest.

Inquiries and applications should be addressed to Vicki Smith, USDA/ERS, Rm. 1226, 1301 New York Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20005-4788 (202-219-0307).

## Lee to Chair USDA/HACU Leadership Group

ERS administrator John Lee has been appointed by Secretary Madigan to chair the USDA/Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) Leadership Group. The group has 12 members: six USDA agency heads or associate heads and six presidents of Hispanic-serving colleges and universities (defined as having 25 percent or more Hispanic students).

The objective of the group is to develop a mutually beneficial partnership between USDA and Hispanic-serving institutions. Special emphasis is on promoting curriculums and careers in fields important to USDA and to the food and agricultural industry.

The group held its first meeting in January and plans to meet quarterly. The first meeting was directed at employment opportunities for Hispanic students, summer jobs, cooperative student arrangements, USDA/university partnership opportunities, and faculty exchanges.

The group is working closely with the Washington office of HACU. HACU will provide an important communication linkage with the approximately 125 Hispanic-serving institutions. Staff support to the USDA/HACU group is provided by Millie Evano, Office of the ERS Administrator, and

Nancy Robinson and Fred Cooper, USDA Office of Personnel.

## Kramer Delegate at FAO Meeting

Carol Kramer (associate director of ERS's Resources and Technology Division) was part of the U.S. delegation to the biennial meetings of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, in Rome, Italy. Kramer participated in drafting USDA position papers and assisted in preparing responses to questions on the state of food and agriculture, international agricultural adjustment policies, international plant genetic resources, forestry, fisheries, and women in development. ERS prepared estimates to update forecasts by the FAO Secretariat on cereals production, use, and stocks. ERS also helped FAO staff update their analysis of U.S. farm policy. The U.S. Department of State addressed organizational, management, and budgetary issues.

Major outcomes of the conference were a consensus budget for 1993, the announcement of FAO support for and involvement in the U.N. Conference on Environment and Development and other ongoing U.N. activities, and endorsement of a series of technical reports.

## ERS Receives CFC's Highest Honor

ERS's 1991 Combined Federal Campaign was a great success. ERS employees contributed a record \$110,883, or about \$170 per employee, and earned ERS its second President's Award, the highest honor in the CFC. Also, 90 ERS contributors gave at least 1 percent of their salary, for which ERS received a special Eagle Award from USDA. Jim McGlone was campaign coordinator.

## ERS Staff Participate in USDA Outlook Conference

"New Opportunities for Agriculture" was the theme of the annual USDA outlook conference held in Washington, D.C., December 3-5. The conference brings together government officials, USDA commodity analysts, and industry experts to discuss prospects, trends, and the forces shaping U.S. and world agriculture.

ERS staff participated as follows:

*Outlook paper authors:* Robert Collender, Stan Daberkow, Douglas Duncan, John Ginzel, Verner Grise, David Harvey, Doyle Johnson, Ronald Lord, Robert McElroy, David McGranahan, Mitchell Morehart, Ralph Parlett, Norman Reid, Carolyn Rogers, James Ryan, James Schaub, John Schaub, Sara Short, Robert Skinner, and Thomas Tice.

*Session moderator:* John Lee.

*Panel moderators:* Peter Buzzanell and Robert Skinner.

## ERS Newsletter

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## **Administrator's Letter—Toward a Publication Philosophy for ERS: Part 1**

In recent years, we have talked a lot in ERS about publications. Does ERS measure its productivity by counting publications? Do we publish too many or too few reports? How do readers view the quality of ERS reports? Should ERS seek to publish most of its research and analysis in USDA and ERS series, or encourage more of it to be published in scholarly journals and books? Should we be trying to report more of our product in language understood by lay readers, or stick to highly technical reports and leave the "extension" of those reports to those who specialize in interpreting technical work to specific constituencies (private media, consultants, extension workers, congressional staff, and others)? How does ERS's publication program mesh with the agency's responsibilities to provide staff analyses to Federal policymakers? How much should ERS publication policies take into account the need for researchers to have visibility in their professions?

These are but a few of the questions ERS managers and staff have been discussing. I suspect that many of these questions have been around since the days of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. Associate administrator Katherine Reichelderfer, the division directors, and I are trying to put together a statement of publication philosophy and policy for ERS. In this and the next issue of the newsletter, I will present my views on ERS publications.

Let's start with who we are and why we exist. ERS is funded with taxpayer money and charged by Congress to provide economic and social science analysis and information that help public and private decisionmakers make better decisions about agriculture, natural resources, rural development, and related matters. Research and analysis are what we do in ERS to create economic information and knowledge. Publications are a part of the delivery process that transfers the information we create to potential users. This gives us three important guidelines:

- ERS publications are intended to serve the readers, not the authors;
- the publications should convey useful information to the targeted readers; and
- the delivery strategy, including publications, should be planned as an integral part of the research.

Let me expand a bit on those points. First, giving primary attention to the needs of the targeted readers while providing professional visibility to authors/researchers is not only possible, but desirable. ERS tries to reward its staff based on the usefulness of their overall contributions. But we recognize the desire, especially of younger researchers, to build a professional identity if they are to be attracted to work in ERS and maintain their competitiveness in the professional job market. Having our researchers well known and respected by their professional peers is also important to the public credibility of ERS and USDA. Nevertheless, the fundamental justification for a publication is that it serves an important need of the targeted audiences.

Second, ERS publications must accurately and clearly inform the reader. This may seem obvious, but ERS reports can sometimes inadvertently confuse, mislead, or misinform readers. This may occur because of poor writing, failing to explain why two reports by different authors present different answers to the same questions, extrapolating or generalizing the results beyond what can be supported by the research, or putting specific research results in a context that confuses their meaning. The use of good research and analysis should be enhanced, not diminished, by the publications that deliver those results.

ERS must also stay in touch with our readers to be sure they perceive the information being communicated in publications as useful to them, and to be sure they are aware of the information products we have available to them.

Finally, publications should not be an afterthought of the research process. ERS's program addresses real problems of real decisionmakers. Therefore, when planning research, we should also be planning how the results of that research will be delivered and to whom. Publications are not ends in themselves; they are the transmission linkages between producers and users of our information.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John".

John Lee

## Current Research

### ERS Develops Outlook Programs in Eastern and Central Europe

The ERS program in Eastern and Central Europe [see *ERS Newsletter*, Vol. 9, No. 5, Oct./Nov. 1991] has created new challenges for ERS as it works simultaneously with the ministries of agriculture in Poland, Hungary, the Czech and Slovak Federal Republics, and Bulgaria to support their transitions to market-oriented agricultural systems.

Behind ERS's quick response to the new challenges in East and Central Europe is its five-person Eastern Europe management team led by Bob Robinson (director of ERS's Agriculture and Trade Analysis Division), who provides overall leadership for the project. Edwin Young and Nancy Cochrane are project coordinators, Cheryl Christensen coordinates with other USDA agencies, and Jewell Tolliver handles the financial accounting. The team has developed a program that supports policy reform and agricultural market liberalization by generating and disseminating information needed to make sound market-oriented decisions; generating the capacity for market-oriented policy analysis; and transforming institutions so that they support, rather than throttle, market forces.

ERS's most tangible accomplishment has been establishing local situation and outlook programs. Poland's program is the most advanced. Since March 1991, eight ERS outlook specialists have worked in Poland with their counterparts to produce three reports, initiate five additional reports, and establish a comprehensive reporting schedule. The first outlook report on grain was completed by Polish analysts with technical direction from Linwood Hoffman. A dairy report

was prepared with assistance from James Miller, and a red meat report was completed with assistance from Shayle Shagam. Ronald Lord is working with Polish counterparts on a sugar outlook report, and Stan Daberkow is working on an inputs report. Three additional reports, on poultry with assistance from Lee Christensen, oilseeds with Roger Hoskin, and potatoes with Larry van Meir, will begin in 1992.

The ministry has committed to a formal outlook schedule of seven biannual reports on inputs, sweeteners, dairy, red meats, grains, poultry, and oilseeds. Young and Robert Bohall have provided assistance in developing the appropriate clearance and scheduling mechanisms for the outlook program. The reports are being disseminated to farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs who need the knowledge to operate effectively in the emerging market economy. Polish outlook experts have traveled to extension offices to discuss their reports, and summaries of key forecasts have been carried by national news media. The reports are also being distributed widely through user-oriented distribution lists prepared by commodity analysts and ERS advisers.

Although Hungary's outlook program began later, its initial report on wheat was published about the same time as Poland's wheat report. Edward Allen and Robert Koopman worked with Hungarian wheat analysts while Edwin Young helped develop the framework for the outlook program. Keith Menzie (Office of Budget and Program Analysis, USDA) is working with counterparts on a feed grains report, and Richard Stillman is working on a red meats report.

Outlook work will begin in the Czech and Slovak Federal Republics with Sara Schwartz and Mark Weimar assisting with grains and livestock. Cochrane and Young will lay the foundation for the outlook program and its integration with upcoming training in policy analysis.

The new thrust in 1992 will be to establish a policy analysis capability to build upon the new information being generated in Poland and Hungary. A team of 10 policymakers, 5 from each country, will visit ERS in February for a workshop on applied policy analysis, organized by Jerry Sharples, and followed by a series of incountry seminars conducted by ERS staff focused on helping midlevel professionals supply pertinent policy analyses to higher level officials. ERS is also seeking to help Eastern and Central Europeans develop sustainable local institutions to meet the needs identified in each country through a model developed for selecting and planning activities and through the link fostered among local institutions.

Success of the project will depend on the ability of these new institutions to survive and flourish in an open, potentially turbulent, political environment. Doing so requires a delicate balance between working with existing officials and creating a more general structure to support analysis for present and future governments. ERS has succeeded in doing this in Poland, Hungary, and Bulgaria, where commitment to developing an outlook and policy analysis ability has survived elections and changes in top agricultural officials. ERS has also developed a framework for working cooperatively with representatives of the Federal Ministry of Economy and the two agriculture ministries of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republics as they debate the nature of political ties between the two republics.

## **Environmental Constraints to Agriculture in the Pacific Rim**

ERS is cooperating with the Task Force on Agricultural Policy, Trade, and Development of the Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference to study the environmental constraints to Pacific Rim agricultural production.

Alan Webb (202-219-0610) and William Coyle are working with Allan Rae (Massey University, New Zealand) to design a series of country case studies to examine the potential effects of environmental degradation on country agricultural sectors and the impact of existing policies designed to address these problems. Countries to be studied are Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand, and possibly China, Japan, and the United States. The country information will be included in a comprehensive overview of environmental issues related to Pacific Rim agriculture and trade.

## **Grain Quality Study**

ERS is evaluating the economic effects of legislative changes in U.S. grades and standards affecting grain cleanliness. Nicole Ballenger (202-219-0880) and Alan Webb are coordinating the international component of the congressionally mandated study to determine whether additional international sales or premiums for cleaner U.S. grain outweigh the costs of mandating higher grain cleanliness standards.

Although the focus is on cleanliness, the study will take a broader view of the grain quality issue. Foreign buyers are interested in an array of quality attributes encompassing processing characteristics, storage properties, and uniformity of quality as well as cleanliness. The analysis will include a series of importing country case studies.

## **Personnel Notes**

### **Cochrane Named Eastern European Project Liaison Officer**

Nancy Cochrane has been named one of the liaison officers for



ERS's Eastern European economic institution-building project. Cochrane and Edwin Young, who is also a liaison officer, are

responsible for the day-to-day operation of the program. They have organized three Washington-based training sessions for Central European ministry officials, worked with Central European counterparts to schedule incountry training activities, and mobilized ERS resources to supply the needed technical expertise.

Cochrane has an indepth understanding of the problems faced by the Central European countries in their transition to democratic market economies and the historical context in which this is taking place. With the insights and the contacts developed through her work in the Centrally Planned Economies Branch, she has been able to help ERS quickly identify a role that it could fill in helping these countries and the most appropriate contacts in Central Europe. She has provided guidance to other ERS participants in developing training programs tailored to the needs of the Central European participants and the necessary orientation to ERS teams traveling to Central Europe.

In 1982, Cochrane joined ERS's Eastern Europe and U.S.S.R. Branch, International Economics Division. During 1982-91, she was responsible for data base development and monitoring current developments in

Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Poland. She has also worked with other staff to develop a model to project the potential long-term impacts of successful reform in Central Europe. Cochrane has authored numerous USDA publications and articles in *Problems of Communism* and the triennial compendia on Eastern Europe published by the Joint Economic Committee of the U.S. Congress.

Before joining ERS, Cochrane was a researcher on Soviet industry at the Library of Congress and taught English as a foreign language at Catholic University. She also spent 2 years on a Fulbright-Hays Research Grant at the Institute of Linguistics, in Zagreb, Yugoslavia.

Cochrane has a B.A. in philosophy from Reed College, an M.A. in economics from George Mason University, and a Ph.D. in linguistics from the University of Texas (Austin).

### **Lin Is New RTD Section Leader**

Biing-Hwan Lin was recently named leader, Alternative



Production Systems Section, Agricultural Inputs and Production Systems Branch, Resources and Technology Division. The section studies input substitution and alternative agricultural systems to assess the tradeoffs involved in alternative input mixes, technology, and management policies.

Lin began his career as an instructor of economics at the University of Alaska (Fairbanks) in 1983. He received the Outstanding Teaching Award in the School of Management in 1985. In 1986, he moved to the University of Idaho, where he conducted research on U.S. agricultural trade with Pacific Rim countries, focusing on

U.S.-Japan trade. Lin was promoted to associate professor in 1990. In 1991, he joined ERS to conduct research on food safety.

Prior to joining ERS, Lin's research experience focused primarily on fishery economics, international seafood trade, and the Japanese beef market. His research has been published widely.

Lin has a B.S. in agricultural economics from National Taiwan University and an M.S. and Ph.D. in agricultural and resource economics from Oregon State University.

## ERS Alumni Notes

[We invite ERS alumni to write to us at the address on page 2 about what they or other alumni are doing, where they are living, etc.]

ERS retiree **Kyle Randall** has been honored by Route One Corridor Housing, which operates two shelters for the homeless in Fairfax County, Va., for 15 years of volunteerism by naming the Kyle Randall Award after him. • ERS retiree **Orlin Scoville** has published two books recently: *Remittance Men, Second Sons, and Other Gentlemen of the West* and *A Career in Agricultural Economics*. For more information, contact Scoville at 4319 N. 39th St., Arlington, VA 22207.

## Highlights of Staff Activities

### Agriculture and Rural Economy Division

At a Regional Science Association meeting in New Orleans, La., **Lorin Kusin** presented a paper, "Factors Associated with Economic Instability in Nonmetropolitan Counties between 1979 and 1988" (coauthored by **John Redman** and **David Sears**); **Michael Lahr** presented a paper, "Job and Residence Moves: A Spatial Multinomial Approach" (coauthored by **Robert Gibbs**); **James Mikesell** presented a paper, "Loan Specialization of Local Banks in Rural Areas"; and **Peter Stenberg** presented a paper, "Academic Institutions and Industrial Productivity Growth in the United States" • **Calvin Beale** spoke on rural population trends at a Council for Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching meeting in Washington, D.C. • **Douglas Duncan** has been selected a LEGIS Fellow during July–December • **Paul Frenzen** participated in a Current Population Survey health insurance data users group meeting in Washington, D.C. • **Thomas Hady** and **Kenneth Hanson** participated in an International Agricultural Trade Research Consortium meeting in New Orleans, La. • **Anicca Jansen** participated in a conference on rural revitalization, sponsored by the North Central Regional Rural Development Center, ERS, Kellogg Foundation, Farm Foundation, and USDA's Extension Service, in Chicago, Ill. • **Steven Koenig** spoke on changes in the Farm Costs and Returns Survey at a Farm Financial Standards Task Force meeting in Kansas City, Mo. • **David McGranahan** participated in an interagency meeting on Mitigation and Adaptation Research Strategies Working Group on Global Change, in Washington, D.C. • **McGranahan**

also spoke on socioeconomic trends in Bureau of Land Management areas at a National Public Lands Blue Ribbon Panel meeting of the National Public Lands Advisory Council in Denver, Colo. • **Gerald Schluter** participated in a conference on classification of economic activity in Williamsburg, Va. • and **Patrick Sullivan** participated in a conference on the survival of rural America in the 21st century sponsored by the Southern Rural Development Center and the Council of State Governments, in Jackson, Miss.

### Agriculture and Trade Analysis Division

At an International Agricultural Trade Research Consortium meeting in New Orleans, La., **Ann Hillberg-Seitzinger** presented a paper, "Impact of Change in Pesticide Regulations under a Free Trade Agreement on U.S.-Mexico Trade of Fresh and Processed Tomatoes"; **Bradley McDonald** was a paper discussant, "Analysis of Trade Liberalization under Induced Technological Improvement"; and **Vernon Roningen** and **John Sullivan** presented a paper, "Current Status of the SWOPSIM Global Trade Modeling System and an Analytical Example Centering on EC CAP Reform" • **Edward Cook** spoke on integrating the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe into the global market economy at American University • **Brian D'Silva** was leader of a USAID/Office of Disaster Assistance famine mitigation activity survey mission to Ethiopia • **Kimberly Hjort** traveled to the Philippines to train USDA policy analysts on development and use of ERS's commodity policy and projections analysis model-builder • **Hjort** also traveled to Indonesia to train FAO team members and Ministry of Agriculture personnel in using the CPPA system • **Robert House** participated in a Food and Agricultural Policy Research

Institute baseline review meeting in Kansas City, Mo. • Martin Johnson participated in a meeting on mechanisms to improve agricultural trade performance under the GATT, at the University of Kiel • Robert Reinsel traveled to Mongolia on an FAO-sponsored mission to assess the economic climate and alternatives facing Mongolian agricultural policymakers in attempting to reorganize the Mongolian economy following the collapse of Soviet influence

• Reinsel also organized a project to create a library of western economics literature in the Economic Research Institute of the Mongolian Ministry of Agriculture, and approximately 300 economics, statistics, and econometrics texts have been donated by ERS staff • Reinsel also participated in a National Public Policy Education Committee of the Farm Foundation meeting in Chicago, Ill. • Bob Robinson traveled to France, Hungary, and Bulgaria to coordinate ERS activities under the U.S.-Central Europe relations project • Shahla Shapouri presented a paper, "Food Sector Strategies of Kenya, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe" at a conference of USAID agricultural officers stationed in Africa, in Durham, N.C. • Lloyd Teigen has been selected a LEGIS Fellow during July–December • Francis Tuan presented a paper, "China's Resource Limitation: The Dilemma of Feeding the Largest Population," at an American Association for Chinese meeting in Charlottesville, Va. • Thomas Vollrath presented a paper, "Competitiveness and Protection in World Agriculture," at the University of Florida • and Kathryn Zeimetz presented a paper, "The Soviet Agricultural and Trade Situation," at a Tri-Cities Agricultural Roundtable meeting sponsored by the University of Minnesota, in Minneapolis, Minn.

## *Commodity Economics Division*

At the Beltwide Cotton Conferences in Nashville, Tenn., Edward Glade presented a paper, "Determining a Methodology for Collecting Research and Promotion Assessments on Imported Cotton Textiles"; Robert Skinner presented a paper, "An Assessment of USDA's Cotton Supply and Demand Estimates"; Harold Stults presented a paper, "North American Free Trade Agreement: Implications for Cotton"; and Carolyn Whitton presented a paper, "Understanding World Markets" • at a National Rice Outlook Conference in Greenville, Miss., Janet Livezey presented a paper, "U.S. Rice Situation and Outlook"; and Nathan Childs presented a paper, "Trends in U.S. Rice Consumption" • Linda Bailey, William Hahn, Ronald Lord, and James Miller participated in a World Bank seminar on stabilization policy and reference price, in Washington, D.C. • John Ginzel participated in a Commodity Futures Trading Commission meeting on the livestock futures market, in Washington, D.C. • Bengt Hyberg and Edward Glade traveled to Tennessee, Mississippi, and Arkansas, to meet with cotton industry officials and to visit cotton gins, warehouses, and a cottonseed oil mill • Hyberg, Mack Leath, and William Lin participated in a USDA Federal Grain Inspection Service grain quality workshop in Washington, D.C. • Doyle Johnson was interviewed by USDA News on supplies and prices of tree nuts, poinsettias, and Christmas trees • Stephanie Mercier presented a paper, "The Relationship between U.S. Grain Quality and Market Competitiveness," at an International Agricultural Trade Research Consortium meeting in New Orleans, La. • Lester Myers was interviewed by Iowa Public Television on generic commodity advertising programs • Patrick O'Brien presented a paper, "Commodity Trade and

Environmental Issues," at an Agri Day conference in Beatrice, Neb.

• Tanya Roberts presented a paper, "Estimated Foodborne Disease Risks and Costs in the United States," at an Allied Social Science Associations meeting in New Orleans, La. • Ronald Trostle presented a paper, "U.S. Food and Agriculture Competitiveness," at a Bennett Agricultural Round Table meeting sponsored by the Farm Foundation in Boca Raton, Fla. • and Bruce Wright participated in a Chicago Board of Trade seminar on developing provisions of futures contracts, in Chicago, Ill.

## *Resources and Technology Division*

At a Southern Agricultural Economics Association meeting in Lexington, Ky., Douglas Beach presented a paper, "Circle of Poison Legislation" (coauthored by Stan Daberkow); Jorge Fernandez-Cornejo presented a paper, "The Demand for Chemical Inputs and Policies for Reducing Their Use in the Central Corn Belt"; Wen-Yuan Huang presented a paper, "Estimating Welfare Costs of a Food Safety Regulation under Risk"; and Biing-Hwan Lin presented two papers, "Substitutability of Crop Rotations for Farm Chemicals" (coauthored by LeRoy Hansen and Stan Daberkow) and "Values of Beef Carcass Characteristics in Japan" (coauthored by Hiroshi Mori, Senshu University) • Stan Daberkow traveled to Poland to work with Ministry of Agriculture officials in developing inputs situation and outlook capability as part of the ERS institution-building project in Central and Eastern Europe • David Ervin presented a paper, "Cross-Compliance and Set-Aside Program for Environmental Improvement" (coauthored by Ralph Heimlich and Tim Osborn), at a workshop on agri-environmental policies in Brussels, Belgium • at the Beltwide Cotton Conferences in Nashville, Tenn.,

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Walter Ferguson presented a paper, "Use of Professional Scouts and Associated Yield and Pesticide Use" (coauthored by William Lindamood, DSC); and Craig Osteen presented a paper, "Potential Economic Effects of Banning Cotton Pesticides: Preliminary Results of the USDA/State Cotton Assessment" (coauthored by Ronald Davis and Kent Smith, ARS). • Wen-Yuan Huang presented a paper, "The Magnitude and Distribution of U.S. Cropland Vulnerable to Nitrate Leaching" (coauthored by David Westenbarger and Karen Mizer), at a National Governors' Association conference in Washington, D.C. • Robert Kellogg and Robbin Shoemaker participated in an orientation meeting on the Comprehensive Environmental Economic Policy Evaluation System, at Iowa State University. • Jan Lewandrowski and Roy Darwin participated in a symposium on

natural hazards and climate change at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. • Merritt Padgett participated in an enumerator training school with NASS staff for the new chemical use and farm financial survey, in Minneapolis, Minn. • and Gene Wunderlich presented a paper, "Valuing a Public Interest in Private Agricultural Land," at an Allied Social Science Associations meeting in New Orleans, La.

#### *Data Services Center*

Linda Atkinson presented a paper, "Coding a User Application into the Executive Information System of SAS/AASIST Software," at a Virginia SAS Users Group meeting in Richmond, Va. • Agapi Somwaru chaired a session and presented a paper, "Relative Inefficiencies, Chemical Regulatory Policies, and Input Substitution in

the Corn Belt" (coauthored by Richard Nehring, RTD), at a joint meeting of the Operations Research Society of America and the Institute of Management Sciences, in Anaheim, Calif. • and Somwaru, Eldon Ball (RTD), and Kenneth Hanson (ARED), were awarded access to Cornell University's Theory Center supercomputer facilities by the National Science Foundation for two research projects developed in ERS on modeling the European agricultural sector and estimating a joint multi-input and output agricultural production system.

#### *Office of the Administrator*

Joseph Braxton and Paul Flaim participated in an American Society for Public Administration conference at American University.